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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

PROBABLE EFFECTS OF ANY MEASURES WHICH HAVE FOR THEIR OBJECT

THE

INCREASE

OF THE

REGULAR ARMY;

AND UPON

THE PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD REGULATE THE SYSTEM FOR CALLING OUT THE GREAT BODY OF THE PEOPLE

IN

DEFENCE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

BY

A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

Sir Alex^r Murr. Mackenzie, Bart.

C'EST A LA POLITIQUE INTERIEURE A CONSTITUER SES FORCES MILITAIRES, RELATIVEMENT AU GENIE ET AUX MOYENS DE LA NATION.
Essai General de Tactique, par Guibert, Disc. Prelim.

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To
James May Esqr
of Seggie Den
from his old friend
The Author

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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS,

&c.

MUCH as the means of adding to our national force have occupied the Public attention, it appears to me, that in all the publications on that interesting subject which I have had an opportunity to peruse, as well as in the discussions which have taken place in Parliament, the peculiar situation of Great Britain as a nation, and the habits and general character of the great body of the people, have not been sufficiently attended to. And yet it would seem, that it is upon full knowledge, and due consideration of these, that a system of national defence, permanent in its establishment and efficient in its operation, can alone be founded.

Circumstances having led my attention to this subject, and having enabled me to remark the effects produced on the minds of the people by the different measures adopted, and the manner in which they affected their general habits, I venture to lay before the Public the result of these observations. Unambitious of literary reputation, and totally unqualified to attain it, my only inducement is to endeavour to direct the attention of those, whose talents and situation enable them to influence the councils of the nation, to some practical considerations which may not have occurred to their minds, busied in the active bustle of public life. A private country Gentleman, called upon from his situation to carry on the detail of the measures adopted by Government, has many opportunities of observing effects which must escape the attention of those to whom such details are less familiar; and I trust that I have not gone far beyond the sphere of such a character in any of the following remarks, or in suggesting a plan founded on the observations I have made. All that I propose to attempt, is to state some general remarks on the probable effects of any measure which may have the increase of our

regular army for its object, and on the principles which I conceive should regulate any system for calling out the great body of the people in defence of our country.

First, then, as to the Increase of our Regular Army.

It were idle to enter into declamation respecting the present state of Europe, and the undenied necessity of straining every nerve to increase the means of resisting our powerful and implacable enemy. It were equally futile to enter into any discussion to prove, that by the increase of our *regular army* we should *best* provide against the danger that threatens us. No man of common understanding disputes this. The real question, then, in which we are interested, is, whether we can entertain reasonable hopes of considerably increasing our regular troops? and, if not, what are the best means of procuring a subsidiary force, to make up, as far as possible, for the deficiency of number in our regulars?

The peculiarity of our situation, as a nation, cannot fail to strike the most inattentive observer. Our population is much inferior to that of many of those nations which consti-

tuted the civilized world, several of which are now swallowed up by one overgrown power; and the demands on that population are much more extensive than in any other empire, with whose history I am acquainted. The support of that naval superiority, without which we could not exist as a nation, requires a force which alone bears no small proportion to the whole of our numbers. We have many and extensive distant colonies to protect; while, to carry on that widely diffused commerce, and those numerous manufactures on which our unequalled resources depend, a very large proportion of our population must be constantly employed, either in the shops of our manufacturers, or the vessels of our merchants—limited therefore, indeed, must be the numbers who can be set apart exclusively for the profession of arms.

But, admitting the full force of the above observation, it may be demanded, whether, in fact, our regular army has yet reached that boundary which it ought not to pass? a question which, I conceive, must be answered in the affirmative.

If, in the first place, we compare our population with that of neighbouring nations, and at

the same time compare the proportion of that population, employed *publicly* and *externally*, it will appear that we have a greater proportion so employed than any other State; so far at least as I have been able to learn, this is the case*.

If, secondly, we examine into the facts which have occurred during the last ten years, we must, I think, be satisfied, that our population, under existing circumstances, cannot afford a larger draft than what has already been made from it. It cannot be pretended, that it is

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* Taking our Regular Army and Militia, including the trifling number of Fencibles at present employed, at the same number as stated by Lord Hawkesbury in his speech in the House of Peers in 1801, and it is hardly to be supposed that the numbers are smaller, viz. - - 186,733

Artillery and Engineer forces, -	11,618
Seamen and Marines, - -	126,279
Seamen employed under the Board of Customs,	897
Do. employed and registered in trading vessels,	143,661
Total,	469,188

Supposing that the gross amount of the population of Great Britain and Ireland is 14,000,000—469,188 is something more than one in 30 of this total population, or rather more than one in 15 of our male population.

only of late that the importance of increasing our regular army, has become an object of anxious attention to our rulers. Various are the expedients which have been resorted to, and various have been their effects; but one conclusion I conceive to be unavoidably deducible from them all, viz. that to raise men for the profession of arms, is in this country a matter of much difficulty. The very fact, indeed, of the late changes in our military arrangements, evinces this truth, as they were introduced on the avowed principle of acting as a stimulus on those who it was wished should enter into that profession; and the failure of this last expedient, as well as of the others, must be surely looked for from some more permanent and efficient cause, than the mere inadequacy of the particular measure. Were there abundance of men, ready to engage in the military profession, it certainly would not require such an accumulation of inducements, such a variety of expedients, to gain them to it; while it is perfectly plain, that if a scarcity of this description of men does really exist, these expedients and these inducements cannot increase the number to any considerable *degree.* A review of the modes, which, at dif-

ferent periods, have been resorted to for recruiting our army, will lead us to this conclusion.

What has occasioned the raising of new regiments at periods when established corps were far from complete? The difficulty of procuring men, and the necessity of stimulating much individual exertion. What occasioned the measure of permitting militiamen to enter into the line? The difficulty of raising men, and the hope of transferring to more general service those already engaged, in a certain degree, in the military profession. What occasioned the measure of the army of reserve? The difficulty of raising men by the ordinary means, and the necessity of having recourse to a species of conscription. And what has, lastly, induced our present ministers to reduce the term of the military engagement, to raise the pay, and to offer a bounty for an engagement of seven years, * equal to what was formerly deemed

* In the year 1805, indeed, the levy-money for regular infantry, for general service, was raised to 22l. 8s. all expences included, owing to the high bounties then given to men raised by the Parish-act, &c. Still, however, 17l. 1s. is the levy-money, all expences included, now allowed to the same description of men for an engagement for seven years, which is as high as

sufficient for an engagement for life? The acknowledged difficulty of procuring recruits, and the hope that additional temptations would induce numbers to embrace a profession, which they would not engage in on lower terms.

Let us examine into the effects of these different means more particularly. By the operation of the first expedient, of raising new regiments, it is well known, that of the numbers which appeared on paper, no inconsiderable proportion were men hardly fit for service, or at least who could continue to be so but for a few years, although the whole country was ransacked for recruits. The raising of fencible regiments (not hitherto particularly alluded to) formed a part of the same measure; and by it not only was much individual and local influence called into action, but the inducement of a temporary engagement was held forth; yet, it is well known, that to obtain recruits, even for fencible regiments, it was frequently necessary to offer bounties, very little, if at all inferior to the bounties then offered

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was allowed at any former period for an engagement for life; and the present levy-money of 10l. 15s. for boys, is as much *as was* ever given.

for the line. When the militia was embodied what was the consequence? As every county was bound to furnish a certain number of men by ballot; and as, from the nature of the employments of men in these kingdoms, few could be induced to serve as principals, it became absolutely necessary that every individual on whom the ballot fell, and all his friends and connections, should exert themselves to procure a substitute—substitutes were indeed procured*, but at an expence which was felt as a most severe burden on the lower and middling

* That high bounties should be demanded by substitutes for the militia is extremely natural. When the bounty for recruits for the line is fixed, the Public must wait till persons are found who will accept of that bounty. But when the ballot to serve in the militia has fallen on any individual, he must procure a substitute within a limited time, or be subjected to a penalty which may be repeatedly exacted. The substitute therefore must be procured *immediately*, and the price, as in every case where there is great demand, becomes extremely high. Every man in Great Britain knows this to be the case. What then shall we think of a plan to raise the militia by means of a small bounty? The example of Ireland does not apply. In that country the body of the people are more inclined to a military life, and less disposed to habits of regular industry.

classes of the community. When the army of reserve was raised, the same causes were called into action, and the same consequences were produced, and felt in the same manner. If we attend to the operation of the Parish-act, we must acknowledge that its effects were perfectly similar. To avoid a pecuniary tax, expedients were fallen upon to procure men; but, although it is perhaps impossible to devise inducements more likely to stimulate individual exertion in recruiting, than those contained in that Act, yet the number of men raised by it, at its most productive period, fell far short of what it ought to have been; and no person, who, from his situation, was called to act under that law, will hesitate to acknowledge, that he very early discovered men were not to be had (or at least very few) but those who would have entered into the army by the operation of the ordinary recruiting service*.

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* It is a fact, perfectly well known to every one who has taken the trouble to inquire into the matter, that almost all the men raised by the operation of this Act, were procured in the large towns, by men who made recruiting their profession, and to whom funds were provided, to enable them to *offer high bounties*, and to secure a large profit to themselves.

If this review of the expedients, hitherto adopted, has illustrated the truth of the general proposition above stated, respecting the difficulty of finding recruits to our regular army, it will lead to this farther conclusion—that as so many expedients have been resorted to, all which have been attended with partial success, and as these expedients have been in operation for a great number of years, it must follow, that the difficulty of obtaining recruits must be now much increased, as the sources from which they are drawn must be exhausted. And that this is the case we are forced to acknowledge, not only from the fact itself, that it is difficult to procure men, but from other proofs equally powerful and conspicuous.

Do we not find that it is difficult to procure men in every employment? Do we not find that the wages of the labourer, the artizan, and the servant of every description, are raised beyond example, and far beyond the rise in price of the necessaries of life, the only criterion by which they can be judged? Do we not acknowledge, do we not boast, that, in spite of the difficulties with which we are surrounded, our trade and our manufactures are in the most flourishing state? Must it not then

be admitted, in addition to the proof afforded by the rise of wages, that from these causes a larger proportion than usual of our population is employed in carrying on that trade; and that increased numbers are occupied in our manufactories? Do we not boast, that agricultural improvements are carried on, not only with increased skill, but with increased spirit, and on an extended scale? And must it not be admitted, in addition to the proof afforded by the rise of wages, that a larger proportion of our population than usual is employed in these occupations? In a word, is it not consistent with the knowledge of every individual, in his own circle, that there exists the greatest difficulty in procuring workmen of every description, to carry on the operations of the day? And, in addition to these proofs, do we not every day find, that if, from any of the accidents to which trade is liable in time of war, any particular manufacture receive a temporary check, the men thus thrown out of employment, are almost immediately supplied with new occupation? Under such circumstances can it be imagined that numbers can be obtained for our regular army? Is it not evident, that the only consequence which can arise from

holding out additional inducements to the recruiting service will be, that the merchant, the manufacturer, the improver of land, and every person who requires the labour of others to carry on his profession, must likewise hold out additional inducements to those he employs to continue their services?

But there is a farther consideration which requires our most serious attention. Could we induce a large proportion of our labourers and artizans to enter into the army, what would be the consequence to that trade and general commerce, by which we are enabled to hold our present high rank among nations?

Could we fix and determine the precise period of danger, the hour, the year, when we should be called upon to take up arms for the actual defence of our country—God forbid that I should put our trade, our manufactures, or our agriculture, in competition with such a duty. But as that hour of danger may be protracted; as we are conscious that our enemy trusts more to the hope of being able to ruin our finances, than to conquer us by the force of arms, we must take care that our military exertions shall not destroy our means of fighting the sort of battle to which we are exposed.

Although I would not put our *commerce* in competition with our *constitution*, I must avow my conviction, that without the former, the latter would not long continue to exist; and while our trade, manufactures, and agriculture flourish, it seems a contradiction to suppose, that a larger proportion of our population can be set apart as a regular army.

A little consideration of the effects which have been, and which are likely to be produced, by the measures lately adopted with a view to the increase of our regular army, will, I apprehend, illustrate and enforce what has been said.

That these measures have had no immediate effect, is acknowledged by ministers themselves*; and yet it is not easy to perceive in what way the inducements lately held forth are

* It has, indeed, of late been asserted in Parliament, that the new measures are now beginning to have effect, not only in procuring men, but in procuring men of a better description than those who formerly enlisted; and that, in consequence, desertion has been less frequent. All this, I apprehend, is very easily accounted for. It has been admitted, that it is only of late that recruits have been procured—*they have not as yet had time to desert.* And if the date of successful recruiting be compared with the date of the threat to

likely to operate with more effect at a future period than at the present. That the Parish-act, as it is called, should require some time to be carried into effect, it was reasonable enough to suppose. A new duty was required of men totally unacquainted with, and unaccustomed to such employment; they had consequently to make arrangements, and concert plans for the performance of that duty; but it is not easy to imagine, that in six or twelve months hence, a man shall see more clearly than at present, the advantage of enlisting for seven years, rather than for life: for this, after all, is the only new inducement of any magnitude which is offered. As far as I have learned from those who have had the best opportunities of observing the effects of this inducement, they have not been considerable; and the more we investigate its nature and effect on the cha-

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reduce all second battalions, which shall not, in the course of a few months, be completed to a very high establishment; or if it be compared with the date of some letters of service lately granted to individuals, to raise men in the *old way*, and with advertisements in the Newspapers, inquiring after persons accustomed to recruit (not *crimps*), we shall be at no great loss to what we should ascribe any temporary success in recruiting.

racter and situation of those upon whom it is to operate, the less sanguine I fear we shall be in our expectation of deriving much advantage from its influence.

The men in this country who enter into the army must be divided into the following classes: Those who, with the consent and approbation of their parents and friends, enter into the army as the profession of their choice: Those who, led away by the gaiety and attraction of the service, are induced to adopt it from levity and thoughtlessness: Those who, in the hour of dissipation, have been induced to enlist: And those who, from failure of the branch of labour in which they have been engaged, are thrown out of employment, and have not readily found other occupation.

As those of the three last classes are either impelled by necessity, or act without consideration, when they embrace a military life, we have only to examine what is likely to be the impression made on the minds of those of the first class, who are supposed to consider and reflect before they enter into an engagement of such importance; and it is indeed to this last description of men to whom it has been generally understood that the short

period of engagement was held out as an inducement to enter into a service, from which they could retire, and return to their families and domestic occupations. But if a young man is inclined to *think* before he enters into the army, will he not be apt to reflect, that by so doing he loses those years of his life, in which he must acquire the knowledge and habits of that profession, upon which his future subsistence may depend, and on which must rest all his subsequent prospects? Will not his parents and friends be apt to point out to him these considerations in the strongest colours? and will they not farther suggest the imminent risk that the habits, which he will acquire, by seven years service in the army, may disqualify him for that strict and constant application and confinement, which the occupations of daily industry demand? will they not be apt to exhibit, as examples, those of his acquaintance, who, having entered into militia or fencible regiments, have, when discharged, found themselves disqualified to follow a trade, which requires constant practice to be master of, and unable to submit to the drudgery of daily labour? Will they not force on his recollection the small number of those who, once

soldiers, have ever applied to regular industry, and the large proportion who have again entered into the army, from finding themselves unable or unwilling to return to the habits of civil life? Of the number of landed proprietors, who have been engaged as officers of regulars, militia, or fencibles, are there many who would advise a tenant, as a *friend*, to allow his son to enter into the army on an engagement for seven years, in the hope that he will return an equally skilful, equally industrious, but more intelligent man, from the employment of these seven years? We must consider, too, that in the present state of this country, from the eminent skill in every branch of business acquired by the division of labour, a degree of expertness is required in every profession, from the most difficult, to the labour of the ploughman, which cannot be obtained but by those, whose practice has been unremitting.

Under these circumstances, then, it is in vain to deny, that every consideration of prudence will operate on the mind of a young man who has to gain his bread by the exercise of any trade, with very nearly equal force, against an engagement in the army for seven years, as against one of a longer period.

I shall not enter into any discussion as to the effects which this measure of temporary enlistment may have upon the discipline of the army. What has been above stated, is meant only to shew that, even reasoning *a priori*, we cannot hope that its effects in recruiting are to be very considerable. If we consult experience, I fear our conclusions will not be different. During the short period that this experiment has been tried, it has completely failed; and if, instead of consulting men, whose ingenuity and acuteness enable them to construct elegant theories, we have recourse for information to any officer who has been eminently successful in the recruiting service, we shall find that the inducements which operate on the minds of those likely to enter into the army must be of a more palpable nature and more immediate effect—we shall find, that a guinea of additional bounty, a puffing recruiting bill, a party more smartly dressed than usual, a serjeant with talents adapted to the business, with money to spend with freedom and gaiety, an officer, whose peculiar turn and whose activity lead him to find out and ingratiate himself with the men likely to enlist, will produce more effect than any general ad-

vantage held forth to the service; and that such means as the above, employed by a recruiting party of the line, have been frequently found more productive than offers of temporary engagement held out by an officer of militia or fencibles. The only effects, which I can conceive to arise from the present system, are, inconvenience to the army, and the expence of a *new bounty once in seven years* to the Public.

Having, I conceive, sufficiently shewn how little reason we have to expect any considerable increase to our regular army, a position which I believe to be indisputable by any person who seriously considers the peculiar situation of the British Empire, our future reasoning must all refer to this as an established truth.

Although it can never be disputed, that an army composed of men regularly disciplined, and habituated to the ideas and life of a soldier, is superior to every other species of troops, to a degree of which, perhaps, none can be fully aware, who have not had opportunities of an intimate knowledge of both: still, I do not apprehend that the situation of Great Britain, as to its means of defence, or even for carrying on offensive operations, is unequal to the dan-

ger that threatens it. Our regular army is, at the present moment, greater than at any former period; its courage has been tried and approved; and unquestionably there pervades our whole military establishment a system and perfection of discipline, of which, till within these last ten or twelve years, we were almost entirely ignorant. Let every possible means be resorted to, to keep our regular army at its present numbers; let every possible effort, that shall not materially affect the permanent resources of the country, our trade, our manufactures, be made to increase it; but let us not be led away by theoretical speculations, to hope that, by any system, or any expedient, we can multiply our numbers, so as at once to increase our army to a great extent, and at the same time retain our superiority in trade and manufactures. Or, if the pressure of circumstances be such as to warrant our rulers to have recourse to the only means by which our regular force can be increased to any important amount, viz. a compulsory levy, let us be aware of the consequences, and prepare to meet them: Let us be aware, that our trade and industry must languish, and that an increase in the price of labour, to an amount almost incalculable, must

be the inevitable consequence. But I am persuaded it is far from necessary to have recourse to such measures. On the contrary, I am fully convinced, that with the regular army we already have, our strength is fully adequate to meet every attack that can be made upon us, if we seek after and avail ourselves of our other resources, and other means of defence.

I shall now endeavour, shortly, to point out the principles upon which I conceive we ought to proceed, and the species of measures I would propose for adoption. In attempting this task, I must however premise, that in the measures which I shall take the liberty to suggest, there will be nothing new, nothing which has not been frequently proposed, nothing, in short, which has not had, in some degree at least, the testimony of experience in its favour; though some modifications, which the experiments already made appear to dictate, may be proposed.

It appears now to be universally acknowledged, that the superiority of a regular army over every other description of force, consists more in the moral character, and habits acquired by a military life, than in accuracy of manœuvre or dexterity in the manipulation of arms. But the more this superiority is felt and

acknowledged, the more forcibly does it lead to this conclusion,—that, compelled as we are to admit the insufficiency of the regular force, which we are enabled constantly to maintain, we ought to endeavour to give as much as possible of the same character to the subsidiary force, with which we must supply the want of numbers in our regular troops; and, if our situation be such as to require that the whole of our male population shall be trained in some degree to the use of arms, that we should endeavour to give to as large a proportion as possible of that population, as much of that character and those habits as circumstances will admit of. In short, that we should not childishly reject what is in our power, because it is not precisely what we could wish.

There has hitherto appeared no one so sturdy an advocate for regular force, and so completely a contemner of every thing else, as to assert, that our present militia, with all its defects, does not at least afford the means of allowing our regular army to be more disposeable. None, I apprehend, will be found to affirm, that our militia is not, in some degree, able to act with our regular army in defence of our country; or that it is not superior to a mass of labourers,

and artizans, assembled together without form or organization. All that I at present contend for is, that having increased our regular army to as great an extent as the circumstances of the country will admit, we should next endeavour to increase, as far as possible, the proportion of our population, to which, under whatever name, and under whatever regulations, the same degree of military discipline, and military character can be given, which is at present possessed by our militia force*. But the numbers which in Great Britain can be spared, even for this species of force, is extremely limited. Let us then have recourse to the next best expedient. By the concurrent testimony of military men, of the highest name and reputation, part of our late volunteer force was declared to

* I have not thought it necessary to enter into any detailed discussion respecting our militia force, to which, as at present established, perhaps the name of fencible would be more appropriate. The name is of little importance, and the establishment itself possesses this advantage, that it enables us to give to very considerable numbers a degree of military discipline which would otherwise be impracticable. By far the greatest proportion of our militiamen could not have been engaged in a military life by any other inducements than the high bounties offered by individuals for procuring substitutes,

be in a state of discipline, approximating to that at least of the militia. Without adhering precisely to that system, let us endeavour, in some way or other, to induce as large a proportion as possible of our population, to acquire the degree of discipline, and military character, possessed by the best of our volunteers. In short, before we have recourse to the last expedient in our power, that of endeavouring to give the whole of our population some idea of the use of arms, let us endeavour to give the greatest quantity possible of those qualities, which we admit to be essential, to the greatest number who are capable of acquiring them; and though we cannot make so great a proportion of our numbers as we could wish good and perfect soldiers, let us not fail to make them *as good as we can.*

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and by the persevering activity of those who exerted themselves to complete the quota of their respective parishes. It is attended with this farther advantage, that it diffuses among our nobility and gentry a degree of military spirit and military habits, which it is extremely desirable to encourage. Consequences so beneficial are not to be relinquished; I am little inclined therefore to examine its defects with too scrutinizing an eye, or to venture theoretical changes upon an establishment so intimately interwoven with our constitution.

It appears, indeed, to be the belief of some of his Majesty's ministers, that there is no medium between a regular force, in the highest state of discipline, and a tumultuous rabble, without any discipline at all; and even that a body of men of this last description, is more to be depended on for activity, energy, and effect, and less likely to be a *depository of panic* and irregularity, than those who have acquired a partial degree of military instruction, and military organization.

It may perhaps be alleged, that the expressions above alluded to, having been made use of only in the heat of debate, were not intended to convey any farther meaning, than that a regular army is preferable to a volunteer force; a truth of which the Right Honourable Secretary did not seem to think the people of this country sufficiently aware, and which it was necessary to impress on their minds by every possible argument, and every force of expression. In this light, I, for one, unquestionably considered it at first; and it made no farther impression on my mind than that of wonder, that a man of the talents and eloquence of the Right Honourable Secretary, could find no better manner of conveying a truth, which

has never been disputed, than in language which was considered as degrading and insulting to three-fourths of the inhabitants of Great Britain. But when the Right Honourable Secretary's own plans appeared, I was forced to confess, that I had altogether misapprehended his meaning, and that he intended to convey a piece of information entirely new; that his meaning really was, that as discipline and military habits constitute the very essence of a regular army, it was altogether preposterous to attempt to give any of those qualities to any body of men which was not a regular army; and that, if every man in the island were taught to fire a musket, and in case of invasion the whole were set out on a shooting-party, without the interference of any one to *mislead* them, we might depend on receiving the greatest degree of advantage from their courage and activity. But, if the same men are taught any farther degree of military skill; if embodied under the direction and management of certain individuals called officers, who should endeavour to keep certain numbers connected in one body; who should endeavour to lead them to those places, where it was supposed their services would be most useful; who should endeavour

to acquaint them with the orders of their superior commanders; who should endeavour to prevent too many from being in one place, while there were too few in another; but, above all, if any power of direction were given to those, whose natural connection with certain individuals among this armed mass made them likely to have any influence, then the brave inhabitants of Great Britain would instantly become the most dastardly cowards; and men who, when left to themselves, would act not only with vigour, but with judgment, would, by the operation of such causes, become incapable of facing an enemy. As all this was unquestionably new, it required full consideration; but, after having bestowed upon it all the thought of which I am capable, I must own, that I am not as yet able to understand it, but that, on the contrary, certain old prejudices stick to my mind with teazing pertinacity. I have always been taught, that the more a man learns of any particular business, the better he is likely to do it; that the larger the body of men called into action, the more necessary do form and organization become; and that there is nothing so likely to make men brave and active, in the defence of their country, as

finding themselves united in action with those they love as their relations and neighbours, under the direction of those whom they have been accustomed to respect and esteem.

Without entering into an elaborate discussion upon tactics, it may, I think, be stated, that the general principle of that science consists, not only in teaching a degree of dexterity in the use of arms, but in producing such a degree of organization in an unformed mass, and in establishing such rules and modes of action as shall enable those, whose office it is to direct, *to move a large body of men from one place to another, without confusion and with celerity.* Such at least appears to me *one* principal and fundamental object of discipline. It is not meant to be asserted, that the only object of discipline is to enable a large body of men to move with celerity and without confusion. Undoubtedly discipline and system have other objects of equal importance in view; but it is meant here merely to state, that the possibility of moving large bodies of men from one place to another, is a primary and most essential object, and that it cannot be effected without previous formation and organization. Supposing, then, that in the case of such irregular

and subsidiary force as it may be necessary to raise in Great Britain, this primary object of discipline is *all* that we can hope to attain—is there any one who will deny that it is of the first importance that this should be attempted? It is hardly possible to imagine, that it can be seriously proposed to put arms into the hands of our whole male population, and that every individual should be left to act independently, and according to his own fancy. The term, *armed peasantry*, sounds well in a speech in Parliament; but there are few general officers, I apprehend, who would chuse to depend for support on such a body of men. But even admitting that, in certain situations, such a description of men might afford some assistance to a regular army, a very little reflection will be sufficient to show, that the inhabitants of *this country* are little adapted to such a species of service.

In a country so far advanced in improvement as Great Britain, there is no set of men who with propriety can be brought under the denomination of *peasantry*, at least, in the signification in which alone that term can be taken when applied to the object under consideration. By an *armed peasantry*, I can understand only

the inhabitants of the country, whose general habits and general occupations render them already, in some degree, prepared for a military life. In the mountains of Switzerland and the Tyrol, in the plains of Hungary, and among the half savage tribes of Poland and Russia, armies may suddenly be raised of men, who have passed their lives in occupations, which fit them for military employment, whose daily habits impress on their minds a species of military ideas. The man who, on every occasion, is obliged to exert his mind in contriving, and his hand in executing every expedient to feed and clothe himself; who must be his own ploughman, labourer, and artizan, has acquired the art of acting for himself under every variety of circumstances; and if he has, from infancy, been accustomed to the life of a hunter, has already, not only some of the most essential habits of a soldier, but many of those ideas which will enable him to act with effect against an enemy. He can readily judge of the spot where he can act with most effect; he can chuse the ground in which he may advance or retreat with the smallest risk of being discovered; he can avail himself of every advantage, which the nature of the ground or the situation of his enemy

gives him; he can, with little inconvenience, submit to those hardships to which he must be subjected, and can extricate himself from difficulties, which, to the sedentary artizan, would be insurmountable.

Is it not evident, that from the great advancement which is made in this country, in the arts of trade and of civil life, from the infinite division of labour which has taken place in every profession, there is not a man in our whole Empire, with the exception, perhaps, of a few in Ireland and the mountains of Scotland, who must not be considered as a mere artizan, whose ideas and habits are confined to the practice of his own profession? Is not the ploughman, and labourer, as completely ignorant of every thing but his own trade, as the carpenter, the smith, or watchmaker? Can it then be imagined, that men of this description can act *alone* with any effect, or be trusted to the activity and ingenuity of their own minds? Are we not, on the contrary, compelled to acknowledge, that such men, to be of the smallest utility, must be trained to habits to which they are totally unaccustomed, and led and directed in their efforts?

If we consult those officers of volunteers, who are acknowledged to have brought their corps to the highest advancement in discipline, they will, I believe, concur in stating, that to give to their men a very competent degree of dexterity in the use of arms, was attended with no difficulty whatever. The object is simple and attractive. They will, I believe, agree in informing us, that they found little difficulty in giving to officers and men some idea of the principles upon which the different changes of formation in a battalion are performed; but they will also, I apprehend, agree in pointing out the very great difficulties which they had to encounter, in impressing on the minds of both officers and men, the necessity and importance of regularity in the military step, of dressing in line, and of preservation of interval in column, without which even one battalion cannot be moved from the place in which it is posted, to a different position, without confusion, and without being rendered incapable of co-operating with others. They will, I apprehend, farther agree in stating, that in their attempts to instruct part of their corps to act as light troops, they found no difficulty in selecting

active young men, fond of this more amusing species of drill; that they found no difficulty in teaching them what are called the light infantry manœuvres; but that they found the greatest difficulty in conveying to them any idea of acting for themselves; that what they could receive minute directions to perform, they did with alertness, and sufficient correctness; but, that if merely directed to cover a movement, or to take a distant position, they exhibited a total want of every sort of idea, which could enable them to act in an independent manner. These gentlemen will farther, I believe, state, that during the short marches which they performed, on going on permanent duty, and during the continuance of that permanent duty, their time was constantly employed in removing the little difficulties and inconveniences to which men, unaccustomed to act for themselves, are constantly exposed; while, at the same time, their habits of life have completely disqualified them for activity of mind, and dexterity in discovering expedients to relieve themselves.

If such be the account which would be given by those who have had some experience in training the general mass of the people; and,

I believe, there would be little diversity of opinion among them—does it not strongly point out, not only the sort of service to which such men are best adapted, but the impossibility of leaving them to act by themselves? Does it not lead us to doubt the possibility of employing the mass of our armed population in the manner lately proposed? Does it not clearly prove *that* to be the most improper manner in which it could be employed, and the absolute necessity of giving to such a mass a greater degree of organization, and of providing a greater proportion of *directing power*, than in any other species of force? And does it not prove, that although we may rely on powerful assistance from an armed people, if formed into regular bodies, which can be led to a given place, and directed to act in a specific manner; we can hope for nothing but confusion, if we require such a multitude to act without union and without direction?

Having had some experience myself, as an officer of volunteers, these considerations have forced themselves upon my attention, although they are, in some degree, contradictory to the opinions generally received, and different even from those I myself at first entertained. In

common, I believe, with many others, I thought, that however difficult it might be to give to such corps the degree of discipline necessary to enable them to act as battalions, and with a regular army, they might become very useful auxiliaries, as a body of light and irregular troops. A more intimate knowledge of the subject has changed my sentiments, and I think it will not be difficult to shew, that it is in battalion, and not as irregulars, that a force of this nature will be most advantageously employed. Without repeating what has been said, it may be stated, (as is now generally admitted), that, to be useful as light troops, it requires men, not only disciplined in the highest degree, but men accustomed to act for themselves; habituated to the expedients necessary to enable them to annoy an enemy, while they keep themselves in security; men who readily comprehend the nature of the ground on which they are to act; who are quick in apprehending and alert in obeying signals, when verbal orders cannot be communicated; and who, inured to the hardships of a military life, can, without difficulty, submit to the labours and fatigues of active service, unprovided with many of those comforts and accommodations

which, by the generality of men, are considered as indispensable. It is hardly possible to expect such qualifications from men taken by chance, from the general mass of population; or that such men should be capable of submitting to the unavoidable hardships of such service, or should possess the intelligence required, without much previous preparation. Still more difficult is it to conceive, that the officers who must lead and direct such men, can possess that knowledge, that judgment, that experience, which will alone enable them to act for themselves, on many occasions, when directions or instructions from superiors cannot be obtained. And were it possible to suppose, that intelligent officers of the line could be procured for the whole, or any considerable proportion of such a mass, can it be expected that they could diffuse spirit, activity, and intelligence, into men whose ideas and habits were so little adapted to their new employment?

I cannot boast of any practical knowledge as a military man, but from the opinions of those officers of experience with whom I have had an opportunity of conversing, and from such information as I have been able to collect from books; I have been uniformly led to believe,

that it is by great advancement in discipline, and great professional habits alone, that men can be formed into useful light infantry, or *Tirailleurs;* that even every sort of previous instruction is inadequate; and that real knowledge of this duty can be acquired only in the field. It is easy in conversation, or in a speech on any public occasion, to descant on the activity of the country-labourer, on his knowledge of the grounds in his neighbourhood, and on his acquaintance with the various roads, communications and passes; but when all this comes to be more minutely examined, with the view of calling these qualities into action, they will be found to be of little real utility. His activity may be questioned; his knowledge of the ground is of a very different nature from that which is required of him in a military capacity; and even his acquaintance with the roads and passes, though it might perhaps enable him to escape from *personal* danger with somewhat less difficulty, would not be found to be of great use to him in any other point of view.

Let any one be appealed to, who has had an opportunity of seeing, what of late years may have been frequently seen, a mock engagement

of volunteer corps. Many of these corps were provided with smart, active, well-drilled companies of light infantry and riflemen. At ordinary drills, or on ordinary field-days, these light infantry and riflemen could perform their duty with much regularity and dexterity; but when they were called on to act independently, was there not generally seen, in the first place, a complete stop? Was there not seen a want of knowledge how to avail themselves of the ground on which they were to act? a want of that quick comprehension of the movements of the general body to which they were attached, which alone could enable them to protect and support it? And a want of that ready apprehension of signals, which is absolutely indispensable? Was it not almost universally observed, that the ground occupied by each individual, was the very worst which, under the circumstances in which he was placed, he could have selected? And did it not generally appear, that hardly one man in fifty thought of placing himself in such a manner as to be able to act with effect, and in security? Such at least was the case, in every instance which I have had an opportunty of observing; and such is the account which I have almost uniformly received

from others, who have been present on similar occasions.

It is far, very far, indeed, from my intention, by what I have here said, to insinuate any thing to the disadvantage of such corps, or any thing disrespectful to volunteer service. My sentiments on this subject are extremely different. But I mean to show, that if such was the consequence, under the most favourable circumstances, when men were acting with zeal, with an anxious desire to exert themselves, and after having had the advantage of a considerable degree of previous instruction; we cannot well expect that this species of duty can be performed by the generality of the inhabitants of this country, without any preparation whatever.

The ordinary duty of a battalion, I think, stands in a very different predicament, as far as relates to the previous skill and previous habits requisite to enable a body of men to perform it, with such a degree of correctness and effect as to make their services highly useful. In this case, little is required of the individual. If he has been so far trained as to be able to use his arms with tolerable dexterity; if he can move so as not to dis-

turb or impede those who are about him; if he can comprehend the directions or orders which he receives, little else will be necessary. He has constantly at hand those who direct his efforts in the most effectual manner; and if he is attentive and obedient, the whole of his duty is performed. It is not the private alone who possesses this facility to the performance of his part: every inferior officer is placed in a similar situation. If he possess as much knowledge merely, as may enable him to understand the orders he receives, which apply solely to the performance of a few simple duties, the same attention and obedience will secure his doing all that is required of him. As the duties of those in superior situations are greater, the stimulus to their attention and exertion increases in proportion; but still the same degree of precision in the task of each remains; consequently, very moderate talents, and a very moderate sacrifice of time, are requisite for acquiring the skill competent to the situation of each. Accordingly, among the late volunteers, there were not only many battalions, who, by the testimony of adequate judges, were considered as fit to act with regu-

lar troops, but many who, on various occasions, executed the manœuvres allotted to them in brigade, with a degree of correctness which gave perfect satisfaction. Indeed, though it be impossible to imagine, on the one hand, that among the armed mass of Great Britain, as many skilful officers could be scattered as would be able to direct their exertions with any hope of efficiency; so it is almost equally difficult to suppose, on the other hand, that any one battalion should be found, which possessed not one or two field officers and an adjutant, who could direct its movements in such a manner as to fulfil the intention of the general officer in command. In the one situation, the skill and intelligence of the individual is confined within a very narrow sphere; in the other, these are required to have a very considerable range. Even supposing a certain degree of disorder to exist in a battalion, the exertions of one or two intelligent and active officers might speedily remedy the evil; but in the scattered files of a body of undisciplined peasants, acting independently, the exertions even of numbers would be unavailing. While skill and intelligence

are evidently required in a smaller number of those who act as officers in a battalion, the union of its parts, and the subdivision of duties, render it, in every respect, more easy to perform these duties with effect.

The great object of discipline, as was observed above, is to enable men to act in large bodies; but the larger the body, the more will it require interior division of parts, and the more necessary will it be to provide a greater degree of *regulating power*. If, in the case of invasion, the whole population of this country, or a large proportion of it, must be called upon to take up arms in its defence, it is surely evident, that however brave and active each individual may be, however anxious to serve his country to the utmost of his power, there cannot but be the greatest risk of confusion from the numbers of such a host; and that, not only in the day of action, but on every other occasion. How difficult must it be to regulate the marches of such a mass? How difficult must it be to provide subsistence for them, when removed even at a small distance from their own homes? Nothing, surely, can obviate such difficulties, but much previous in-

terior formation. Can this formation be speedily given to the detached squads, who have been separately drilled by constables and peace-officers, in their several parishes? Can these be compacted at once into larger bodies, fitted for acting together; fitted on the sudden for being placed under the superintendence of those who are to regulate their movements, direct their efforts, and provide for their wants? Equally impossible should I imagine it to be, to attach and incorporate considerable numbers with our regular battalions. At such a period, the attention of our regular officers will be sufficiently occupied with their own duties; and the junction of an immense multitude of irregular and undisciplined recruits will be merely an accession of embarrassment and confusion. Were a sudden march ordered, what must be the consequence? The whole of this armed peasantry must be left behind, as they are not supposed to be provided with any of the requisites for carrying even their own necessaries. They must remain, either to be incorporated with the next battalion which comes to the place, or exposed to the attack of an advancing enemy, without any means of defence. For it will hardly be asserted, that, when deserted by the

regular force, they can possess the power of protecting themselves*.

When volunteer corps were first raised, in 1793, they were much subdivided into detached companies. At that time, such a species of formation sufficiently answered the purpose for which it was intended. The danger of invasion was not very great; and a company of

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* In a late publication * it is proposed, that the armed body of the people should, in case of invasion, be *incorporated* with the regular army. That the inexperience of the officers (or leaders, as this gentleman chuses to call them) of the armed mass, or subsidiary force, would require the aid of officers of the line, none will deny; but the intermingling the whole, in the manner this author proposes, would, I fear, tend more to paralyze the powers of our regular troops, than could be recompensed by any advantages bestowed on our irregulars. I fear, too, that little harmony or union could be expected in an army constituted in this manner; and that, although a few among the higher ranks of the armed mass might possess liberality of mind sufficient to induce them to submit to the superiority of their new associates, that superiority would be too much felt, and too much assumed, not to create jealousies, disputes, and disunion, in so heterogeneous a body. All that I can imagine to be possible, is, that the battalions of our subsidiary force shall be united, in *brigade*, with

* Letters upon the Establishment of Volunteer Corps, &c. by James Fergusson, Esq.

armed volunteers was sufficient to check any appearance of riot or sedition in its own neighbourhood; and, indeed, had this farther effect, that it gave union and confidence to the loyal and patriotic. When, however, the same species of force was again established in 1803, the case was widely different. The natural good sense of the people of Great Britain, the firm-

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the battalions of militia and of the line. And I have little doubt, if due attention is previously paid to their instruction, that they will perform their part of the duty with sufficient correctness. If officers commanding brigades have their staff intelligent, and sufficiently numerous, every aid can be afforded to inexperience. The dangers which are apprehended from the want of discipline in the armed body of the people, in case of retreat or defeat, are, I fear, unavoidable; but these dangers may be lessened, if due attention is bestowed on previous preparation, and if the whole are placed under the orders of an intelligent brigadier-general with a competent staff.

Although I differ from the learned gentleman on this, and on several other points, I give him full credit for the motives which induced him to address the Public, and for the talents which he has displayed. Too much attention cannot be paid to what he has so ably stated, respecting the importance of training the body of the people to arms, under the influence and superintendence of the landholders and gentry. See page 64. of the above pamphlet.

ness of Government, and, above all, perhaps, the observed effects of the French Revolution, had completely done away that spirit of innovation, and that democratical mania, which were so conspicuous at the former period. The nature of our danger was now changed. Instead of the turbulence of seditious democrats at home, we had to guard ourselves against the threatened attacks of a powerful foreign enemy. Hence, not only his Majesty's ministers, but almost all the lieutenants of counties, saw the propriety of changing the form to be given to our volunteer force; and it was raised, in most instances, where circumstances would admit of it, in larger connected bodies. The advantages arising from this change were speedily seen—a degree of order, system, and regularity was introduced, which produced effects that the most sanguine could hardly have hoped for. A great and powerful force was instantly raised, a considerable proportion of which, in the course of a few months, was declared, by officers of acknowledged judgment, to be in such a state of discipline, that it might safely be depended on to act with our regular army. Let us avail ourselves, then, of the experience we have had; let us improve our measures by

the lessons which that experience hath taught us. But, at a moment of such portentous import, let us not seek after new plans, founded on theory alone, the effects of which it is impossible to predict. Above all, let us not for an instant imagine, that we can derive effectual aid from our armed population, unless it is previously formed and fully organized.

Having declared my opinion of the necessity of entrusting our national defence to a subsidiary army, raised from among the body of the people; and having also stated some reasons which induce me to think, that to do this with effect it is absolutely necessary that this subsidiary army should be regularly organized, and accustomed to as great a degree of military discipline as it is capable of acquiring, I shall now proceed to point out the manner in which I imagine it can be best raised, and the kind of formation it should receive.

Could we, as has been observed, predict the hour of our danger, there would be little difficulty with respect to the mode of raising the force in question. Ministers might either have recourse to compulsory measures, or they might, with perfect safety, rely on the loyal and patriotic spirit of Britons, who, at such a moment,

would flock with ardour round the standard of their country. But this is far from being the case. The plan of our enemy evidently is, to protract a war in which he may gain much and has nothing to lose. He knows the power of the British Empire; he knows the steady and animated courage which characterises this nation; he knows the folly of a direct and immediate attack. His expectations of success are founded on the hope of his being able to lull us into security, or to weary us out in the contest, before he makes his last daring attempt. He trusts, that if we are compelled to make such preparations as may materially interfere with those habits of industry, and those commercial pursuits, which provide such resources as with all his power he cannot impair; if he can compel our Government to have recourse to measures that shall be severely felt, and highly unpopular, he may then make an impression, which at present he knows to be totally impracticable. Fully aware of this, it ought to be our study to devise such measures as, while they keep us in a state of constant preparation, shall not materially interfere with our trade and industry, and shall be acceptable and agreeable to the dispositions of the people.

To do this, the habits and dispositions of the people must be studied.

One of the most characteristical effects of our glorious constitution is, that it has formed that strong chain, which, by its imperceptible links, unites the different classes of the community in such a manner, that not only are their real interests inseparable, but there is a degree of personal connection which never took place under any other government. The tie between patron and client, in ancient Rome, has always been considered as one of the happiest political devices for uniting the higher and lower classes of society. But that was surely much inferior, in its effects, to what takes place in this happy country. Whatever influence is possessed by the most powerful peer, must depend on the estimation in which he is held among the surrounding gentry. The influence of the landed proprietor must depend on his respectability, at least on his popularity, among his neighbours of inferior fortune. There is not a man in the island, to whom some sort of consequence is not important, and who must not depend for it on the estimation in which he is held among his friends and neighbours, however inferior they may be to him in

fortune or situation. These common ties bind together, in the closest manner, all classes in this country. And there is no man who does not feel, that there are some above him to whom he looks for patronage; some his equals, to whom he is attached by family connection, by neighbourhood, and interchange of friendly offices; and some beneath him, to whom he is bound, from the attachment they have shown him, or whom his situation calls upon him to assist and protect.

This happy feature in the national character has been attended with the most fortunate consequences: The powerful and the rich, instead of crowding to a court, as was the case in every other country in Europe; instead of becoming intriguing parasites, and of rioting at all times in the dissipations of a metropolis, have been taught to prize the rational pleasures of a country life, where, surrounded by friends and neighbours, they enjoy delightful relaxation from severer duties; where they unite in schemes for fertilizing the soil, and adding to the comfort and convenience of those around them; and where they cultivate the friendship and good wishes of those to whom they look for support in their views of political importance, and

parliamentary influence. Their union in these respects, and even the little party differences which sometimes occur, have a tendency to strengthen the bonds of friendship and attachment.

In looking for the means of defending our country, let not this great principle of the mutual connection, subsisting between all ranks of the community, be forgotten. On the contrary, let us avail ourselves of it as a most valuable auxiliary; and we may be assured that it will materially contribute, not only towards completing the numbers we need, but likewise towards infusing a spirit of union and co-operation, which will be attended with the happiest consequences.

Let us now attend to another consideration. Let us remember, that we must interfere as little as possible with those habits of constant industry, upon which so great a part of our national resources depends. This will require more delicacy of management than may perhaps be at first imagined. The experience we have obtained under the volunteer system, may be of considerable service to us on this occasion.

In large towns, the time occupied by attendance at drills could not be felt as a material inconvenience, no time being taken up, except what was spent on the exercising ground, at least very little more; but, in many parts of the country, the case was widely different. The time of going to and returning from drill was, not unfrequently, almost as much as the time of exercise. And as the occupations of the country can, in most instances, be carried on only during day-light, this was very sensibly felt in the work of the day. Still more was it felt, when, instead of drills of a single company, a whole battalion was required to assemble; and, on the principles upon which alone I can conceive a useful force to be raised, such assembling in considerable numbers is indispensably necessary. So much, indeed, was this felt as an inconvenience, that, after the first impression of immediate danger had passed away, there were many masters who required their servants, journeymen, or apprentices, to give up their situation as volunteers. On occasions of permanent duty the loss of time was still more severely felt, although every attention was paid to have that duty performed at such seasons of the year as might be

the least incommodious. The farmer had his horses kept idle for a fortnight or three weeks; the mason, or carpenter, was called from his employment, perhaps when engaged in a piece of work which admitted not of delay; the weaver, when his web was only half finished, and impatiently demanded by the manufacturer. In short, almost every individual, in some way or other, found such interruption of his regular and constant occupation, to be attended with very serious inconvenience. These inconveniences were certainly submitted to with the utmost cheerfulness and alacrity; and would be submitted to again, were the situation of the country to demand it. They are mentioned here, merely as instances of the effects to be expected from any measure, which should lead to a considerable interruption in the ordinary employments of the great body of the people. We must endeavour then, to adopt such a plan as shall require, *not only as small a sacrifice as possible, in this particular, but such as shall make the burden fall as light as may be on those to whom its operations would be most injurious.*

Whatever be the principle upon which this subsidiary force shall be raised, whether under the authority of a law requiring this duty, or

by the voluntary enrollment of those who are willing to undertake it; if we expect it to produce its full effect, it will be necessary that the duty be in some way or other rendered *agreeable* to those by whom it is to be performed. There is a very homely adage, which is peculiarly applicable to the species of measure now under consideration; and, as it contains a truth to which it is highly important that we attend, I shall not reject it because it is homely—*One man may lead a horse to water, but twenty can't make him drink.* We may, nay, probably we ought to raise the force in question, under the authority of a law securing the services of the requisite number; and the power of those who are to lead and direct it ought, unquestionably, to be strengthened by a legal sanction. But all the experience we have derived from the operation of the volunteer system must convince us, that authority alone will not be sufficient to produce that attention, and that regularity, which are absolutely requisite, in order to give effect to the lessons of the instructor. Men who know that they are at all times subject to martial law, by which instant punishment follows the commission of the slightest offence, may be compelled to duty by

such a motive. But, although the officers of volunteer corps possessed the power of punishing offences against regularity, and although the whole, while on permanent duty, were under martial law, and although that power was useful and necessary for checking momentary offences, and for securing punctuality of attendance, it was never supposed to have any influence in producing that attention, and that alacrity in the performance of duty, for which so many corps on that establishment were conspicuously remarkable. *These* were produced, and must be produced by the operation of very different causes: by zeal for the service in which they were engaged; by respect and attachment to the officers by whom they were commanded; by that kind of pride which arises from an *esprit de corps;* by that fondness for the situation of a soldier, so natural to the mind of man, and that vanity inherent in all, which is gratified by the gaiety of military dress, and the splendor of military parade. Every officer who has commanded a corps of volunteers, well knows the force of these causes; and knows, that if, from the extent of the population of the district in which his corps was raised; *if* from his own popularity, and that of

the officers under his command, he possessed a facility of *dismissing* those who were inattentive, irregular, or disobedient, he enjoyed, by these means, more *real power* than could have been given him by any law, however severe.

This part of the subject appears to me to be of so much importance, and so little apt to strike the minds of those who are most likely to be consulted on the question under consideration, that I must take the liberty to enter into it somewhat more in detail: with this apology, that as men employed in the conduct of public business, must have their minds engaged in the more general objects presented to them, so those who, like myself, are occupied with the less considerable concerns of domestic life, have not only better opportunities of being acquainted with the *smaller* motives which influence the generality of men, but are in the daily habit of being obliged to attend to them. And in measures, the success of which must, in a great degree, depend on their obtaining the cordial co-operation of all ranks in the community, it is of the utmost importance that our rulers should thoroughly know all the effects likely to be produced on the public mind, in order to enable them duly to appreciate the va-

rious plans which may be presented to their consideration.

It is a most natural wish, in those who have a superintending duty to perform, to be possessed of the *power* of executing their task. But they do not always select that species of power which is best adapted to their purpose; nor, indeed, can they make this selection, without being possessed of the experience that may enable them to select with discrimination. On the first establishment of volunteer corps, I am persuaded, every officer who commanded a battalion imagined that the opinion of the Attorney-General, allowing no man to resign without permission, and the authority to punish by fine and temporary imprisonment, not to mention the establishment of martial law when on permanent duty, were objects of the utmost consequence, which would bestow on him such a power as must greatly facilitate the execution of his duty. No doubt, in some respects they did so; but, I believe, in very few instances were these regulations found to be of much permanent effect. Indeed, the opinion alluded to, was, on consideration, discovered not to be well-founded; but it was farther discovered, that little advantage would be derived from

compelling a man to serve, who served with reluctance. Fines were indeed levied, and were certainly useful in securing regular, or rather *punctual* attendance: I mean, in securing the exact attendance of men at the hour appointed, and in enforcing attention in keeping arms and accoutrements in a state of high order. Yet, I believe, in most instances, these fines were submitted to, more from the good sense of the men, who saw the propriety of establishing such regulations, than from any consideration of the legal authority by which they were imposed. And as to martial law, I have hardly heard of an instance in which it was necessary to have recourse to it, or in which its influence was, or could have been, in any degree serviceable*. The fact, however, is undoubted, that many of those corps were in a high state of discipline, and that order and

* It is far from my meaning to assert, that martial law is not absolutely necessary when men are assembled for the purpose of any sort of permanent duty: I intend merely to show, that it is from different motives than those arising from compulsion, that we are to expect that the ordinary duty of the armed people can be carried on, and attention and regularity secured.

authority were completely established. What were the causes which produced this effect? I believe, the following:

In the first place, the real patriotism and loyalty of the people induced them to join these corps with the utmost alacrity. In the next place, a desire to increase the numbers of a company or of a battalion, under the command of those whom they esteemed and respected. The military dress and military parade acted powerfully on the minds of no inconsiderable number. And, finally, the pecuniary inducements, the exemption from ballot, and the pay, which, to those on the June establishment, afforded a full compensation for the time occupied, operated on all.

These causes easily account for the readiness with which the numbers of the various corps were at first completed. The same causes produced the happiest effects in establishing good order and discipline. At the first establishment of these corps, there were certainly mingled with the deserving some of a different character—men who had neither that sense of public duty, nor that feeling of personal attachment, which would induce them to submit to the trouble of acquiring a knowledge of

their duty, or to that ready and willing obedience which are so highly necessary. But, on such occasions, (and they were very rare) it required but a moderate degree of firmness in the commanding officer to dismiss publicly such as were guilty; and when this expedient was adopted with judgment, it never failed to obtain the approbation of every man in the corps. The effects produced by it were of the most salutary nature: it exposed the culprit to the derision, and contempt, and dislike, of his neighbours and companions, and made others, who might have a tendency to similar misbehaviour, dread the consequences. Besides, the facility with which vacancies, thus occasioned, were supplied, convinced every individual, that his own personal importance was not so great as he might have imagined; and the *esprit de corps*, which was soon felt, led those with whom he had joined, to treat with disregard every one, who, from his misconduct, had been considered as unworthy of retaining his situation among them.

Personal attachment, also, had the greatest weight. No man willingly offends those, whose good opinion or good offices he wishes to secure. Many a man submitted to what, at

the time, perhaps, he considered as a hardship, rather than disoblige the superior whom he respected, the master who employed him, or the neighbour to whose good will or kind offices he had been, or hoped to be indebted.

Those who imagine that the military dress and military parade had little effect, are, I apprehend, much mistaken. That the younger part of volunteers were fond of them, no one will dispute; and I believe, that they who are best acquainted with mankind in general, will be the most easily persuaded of the extensive influence of this cause. If any one will reflect on the anxiety with which every corps, not of volunteers only, but of regular troops, endeavours to possess as much splendour of appearance as possible; on the attention bestowed in the selection of a becoming and gay dress; on the solicitude in forming a numerous and uncommon band of music, or, if this be beyond their reach, in excelling in their drums and fifes. If any one will recollect how frequently he has heard superiority in these frivolous articles boasted of, not only by the officers, but by the men, both in regular and volunteer corps, he must acknowledge the influence of such causes. And he must be a weak minister and

an ignorant politician, who neglects to address himself to the *follies of men*, as well as to their understanding and judgment. The being indulged in these points of show and vanity, I have not a doubt, operated on the minds of many, and by procuring them this species of gratification, induced them to submit readily to much trouble and restraint.

It is not merely on those of the lowest rank, that this love of military dress and military parade exerts its influence. Every man, who has considered the subject, will acknowledge that its effects are very generally observable; and, perhaps, it may be asserted, that they who are most liable to its influence, are the men who, in general, will perform the kind of duty required, in the case under consideration, with the greatest alacrity, activity, and correctness. It will scarcely be denied, that most corps, whether regulars, militia, or volunteers, who have been considered as superior in discipline and correctness in the important parts of their duty, have also been conspicuous for their attention to the smartness of personal appearance, and to the parade of the military profession.

Such, I believe to be the result of our observation from experience; and I am disposed to

think, that a similar conclusion may be deduced from reasoning *a priori*. The great motives of patriotism, and a sense of public duty, may induce men to make *great* sacrifices and *great* exertions. But it requires the stimulus of feelings more generally diffused, of feelings more constantly present to the mind; in short, it requires the operation of motives which more immediately and more uniformly address themselves to the fancy, to produce and keep alive such a steady and unremitting attention to the minutiæ of frequent drills, and the various details of regimental duty, as cannot be neglected without the loss of that accuracy and regularity which are absolutely essential. To that kind of military force which is the chief object of our present consideration, these remarks are peculiarly applicable. The men who are uninfluenced by those little vanities above described, are apt to have their minds fully occupied with what they conceive to be their *real business;* when, therefore, they are not stimulated by the spur of immediate danger, they are apt to think that their application to their military task may be relaxed, and to consider it as a happy relief, when they may devote their whole time and attention to their own import-

ant personal occupations. But they who feel some pride in acting in a military character, who are somewhat vain of their military dress, and who are pleased with *the pomp and circumstance of war*, feel their new duty as an indulgence and a gratification, and will be easily induced to bestow their time and their trouble, in order that the corps with which they are connected may be conspicuous for smartness and correctness. And the very same turn of mind, which leads them to derive satisfaction from what their more sober-minded friends may term the frivolities of the profession, will make them attend with the greatest pleasure to the minute details of accuracy in movement, and render them solicitous to keep not only their dress, but their arms and accoutrements, in a high state of order. Every duty is best performed when the duty is agreeable. And, at a time when it is necessary to employ every motive that can influence the mind of man, shall we neglect those incitements to the defence of our country, which we know to be of powerful and general effect, because the grave, the morose, and the fastidious, may declaim against them as the gratifications of puerile vanity?

Will it excuse our legislators, should their measures prove unsuccessful, that they disdained to avail themselves of the *foibles* of mankind, and rejected every attempt to make the vanity and prejudices of the people useful auxiliaries in the cause of their country? Our enemy, though possessed of more real power than has been in the hands of any individual since the fall of Roman greatness, neglects not to avail himself of the characteristic vanity of the people over which he rules. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.* And to quote still higher authority relative to a cause of far greater moment than even that of which we are treating—*The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.*

I have already endeavoured to show the importance of availing ourselves of the happy connection subsisting between the various classes of society in Great Britain. I have attempted to point out the necessity, not only of consulting the disposition and turn of mind of the inhabitants at large, but likewise of attending to the nature of their pursuits and occupations; the necessity of indulging those weaknesses to which most men are in some degree liable, and which operate on those especially

who are most likely to be of the greatest utility in the present instance. I shall now proceed to state some farther considerations, an attention to which I conceive to be no less necessary.

That it is the prerogative of our Sovereign to call out the whole of the lieges in defence of the state, no one has attempted to deny. Nay, we claim it as our right and our privilege. But as it is a common duty, it ought to be borne equally by all. In this, as in every other instance, it is the duty of those in power, while they secure complete effect to the measures they adopt, to secure also to the people, that the burden occasioned by carrying these measures into execution shall fall with the utmost possible equality. And not only is this the *duty of ministers*, but, in a free country like ours, no measure can long produce any beneficial effect, unless it do possess this peculiar quality.

When volunteer corps were established in 1803, the measure was in a great degree new, at least to the extent to which it was then carried. And I am far from imputing blame to those who were then at the head of our councils, for the faults which have been observed in the regulations then established. My object is to no-

tice their effects, that we may derive benefit from experience.

The principles on which these measures were adopted, seem to have been the following:— Ministers observed the readiness and alacrity exhibited by all ranks in taking up arms in defence of their country. They saw that there were numbers of the more wealthy part of the community, who were willing to undertake this duty without *making any demand on the public purse.* They remarked, that others were willing to *contribute a share of the necessary expence:* while, in various parts of the country, there were many, who, though unable to undertake the pecuniary burden to which this duty would subject them, were willing and ready to *sacrifice to it a portion of their time.* Ministers considered themselves as called on to take advantage of all these different circumstances, and to accept of the services of all on the terms upon which they were tendered.

As a temporary measure, much may be said in defence of this system. But let us attend to the consequences. The number of those who can afford to arm themselves, and serve their country without any remuneration, is so small, as hardly to enter into any calculation which can

be instituted on the subject. But even of the small number of corps formed on this principle, there was no inconsiderable proportion in which it was found, that when the first impression of danger was removed, when the novelty was over, attendance became languid; and individuals, who had joined with the utmost zeal, soon grew tired of the restraint and expence to wliich they had subjected themselves. Besides, among men of this description, it was very soon found to be hardly practicable to establish any species of regular discipline and subordination. That there are a few such corps who afford most honourable examples of exception from these remarks, is unquestionably true: but still, that they are in general well founded, will not, I am confident, be disputed by any one acquainted with the subject.

The numerous and munificent contributions of individuals and of public bodies, in support of the second class of volunteers, will afford a lasting and honourable testimony of the patriotism and liberality of all ranks of men in this country. It was a moment of danger; and every man in the island was ready to contribute his pecuniary aid, or his personal service, or both, to the public cause. The *immediate* pressure of

that danger has not of late been so sensibly felt and acknowledged. The expediency of raising contributions on the liberal and patriotic, while those of a different character are exempted, begins to be disputed. It begins to be pretty generally received as an undeniable maxim, that the general cause should be supported from the general purse. And there are few so sanguine as to imagine that such contributions could be now obtained. Amidst all the dissatisfaction produced by the adoption of the late measures respecting the volunteer force, amidst all the proposals for counteracting the effects of the limited allowances now granted, has it ever been proposed to supply these deficiencies by subscriptions similar to those which were obtained in 1803?

But this is not the only point of view in which the subject must be considered. If we examine it more minutely, we shall find, that these subscriptions, however liberal, did no more than provide funds for setting the system afloat. From the extraordinary demand occasioned by the embodying such a number of men, clothing could not be provided but at an expence greatly exceeding the Government allowance. Various expences occurred, either

necessary in themselves, or which became so from the necessity of concurring in the modes adopted by others: and there were few corps in which the funds provided by subscription were not exhausted during the first year of the establishment. In consequence of this, those who became officers in such corps, found themselves subjected to an expence, which, to many, was far from convenient, not only in providing themselves with uniforms, but in various other outlays, to which, although it might be difficult to give an appropriate title, and which, taken singly, were perhaps trivial, amounted in the course of a year to a sum which they were little able to spare. In very many instances, accordingly, most respectable individuals, who had readily tendered their services, and who from their character and habits were peculiarly well adapted to act as leaders and directors of their friends and neighbours, found themselves, from prudential considerations, compelled to relinquish a situation to which they were on many accounts much attached: and it was no easy task to supply their place; for it cannot be supposed, that in arming the whole body of the people, men of affluent fortune can be found in such numbers and in all places, as that

every one who shall be called on to do the duty of an officer shall be of this description.

The situation of the corps upon the establishment of June 1803, was very different. The allowances granted for general expences, and the pay granted to officers, enabled those who commanded these corps, if they acted with due attention to system and economy, not only to defray all necessary charges, without any demand upon private contribution, but likewise to secure those officers who served under them, from any pecuniary sacrifice. In very few cases indeed, if in any, was it ever imagined that any one (those excepted, who, from former service, enjoyed constant pay) should derive emolument from his situation as a volunteer officer. But he was secured from any demand upon his private purse, by every expence connected with his situation being defrayed out of the general fund of the corps, of which his pay made a part; or he retained a portion of his pay adequate to cover his necessary expences.

But farther, although the twenty or twenty-four days pay, granted to the privates on the August establishment, might be considered as, in general, sufficient compensation for the time actually occupied at drills, it did not

compensate for the interruption to ordinary occupation, occasioned by the situation of a volunteer. And men, who would willingly have done every thing in their power to serve their country; or who were, from vanity, or from affection to their superiors, desirous of remaining, were compelled to retire, because *they could not afford* to remain. In this instance again, the situation of the June class was widely different. From the number of days for which pay was granted, much of the duty, particularly in summer, was performed at times which did not at all interfere with ordinary labour; and, in many cases which fell under my own observation, individuals were enabled to accept of wages somewhat under the ordinary rate, as an inducement to their masters and employers, to permit them to retain their situation as volunteers. It will not be disputed, that those, on whom a consideration of this nature is likely to act, form the most numerous class of the community; that class on which it is easiest to impress ideas of military discipline and subordination, and which will furnish men, whose habits fit them the best for filling the ranks of an armed people. And so far am I from coinciding in opinion with those,

who think that those volunteer corps alone should be kept up who require no pecuniary aid from Government, that I am perfectly convinced, that there are few indeed of such corps who could be made really serviceable. But their numbers must, at all events, be so small as to render any arrangement with respect to them of little importance. I believe I may assert, without the danger of contradiction, that it was uniformly found that the volunteers on the June establishment were superior in discipline to those on the August establishment; and that, with the exception of a very few instances indeed, those on the August establishment were more likely to be serviceable than the *generality* of those splendid corps in some of our larger towns, who served without any pay whatever. To raise a force of any magnitude, it is to the class of labourers and artizans that we must look. And I am decidedly of opinion, that, unless the Public submit to such an expence as shall indemnify these men, not only for the time actually employed in acquiring a knowledge of their duty, but for the interruption to their ordinary occupations, which that duty occasions, the subsidiary force required cannot be raised without creating much hardship, and being

very unequal in its operation. And unless the Public submit to the expence of rendering the duty agreeable to those who are to perform it, it will be performed in a very incorrect and a very languid manner.

I shall now proceed to consider the different modes in which a force of this sort may be raised. It is unquestionable, that in the year 1803 a force adequate, in point of numbers, to the wishes of Government, was raised by voluntary enrollment. Nor will it be disputed, that, at any period of public difficulty, the same spirit would prevail. But as what is now proposed is a *permanent*, not a temporary measure, it appears to be as impolitic to trust to the voluntary exertions of individuals for our permanent means of defence, as it would be to trust to the liberality of individuals for our permanent revenue. It is therefore by the operation of law, enforcing the performance of this duty, and regulating the manner in which it shall be performed, that the system of our internal means of defence should be established. But when by legal authority we have secured to the system, regularity and efficiency in its operation, it is of the utmost consequence, at the same time, that the hardships and incon-

veniences which it produces, shall be as much as possible obviated or removed.

That every man in the empire should be either trained to the use of arms, or should be appointed to some species of service, so as that all may co-operate in the general cause, is a proposition to which every one will assent. But the species of employment adapted to different descriptions of persons, the species of service which each can perform with the greatest degree of ease to himself and advantage to the Public, must be extremely different: and it is not possible to establish one general rule equally applicable to all. It surely requires no argument to enforce this; or to show, that in the hour of danger there must be a variety of duties sufficient to occupy every man in the country, and that the whole cannot be employed as combatants. I have already stated the reasons which induce me to think, that the number who can be trained in such a manner as to make them of *real utility* in this last capacity, must necessarily be limited. Still, however, if proper measures are resorted to, I have no doubt that their numbers may be rendered as great, as the circumstances in which we are placed can at any time require. That this

may be done, and that it may be done with as little inconvenience as possible to individuals, securing at the same time the object of Government to its full extent;—while the law shall enforce the quantity of duty to be performed, and shall regulate the manner of its performance, let it leave, as much as *possible*, to individuals, the selection of the particular duty which they are most willing and most adequate to undertake.

The population of every county, parish, and town, is perfectly ascertained. Let the law authorise Government to call out any given proportion of that population, for the performance of the various duties prescribed. Let higher and inferior degrees of duty be required, so that while we obtain from a part of our population a sacrifice of time and labour, which cannot without oppression be demanded from the whole, none shall be exempted from a participation in those duties which are equally incumbent upon all. The experience of the volunteer system has taught us, that there are among us no inconsiderable number, who, on receiving a very moderate remuneration from the public purse, are ready and willing to devote such a portion of their time to acquire the

knowledge and practice of military discipline, and to such a degree, as to render them useful auxiliaries to our regular troops. Shall we not avail ourselves of this circumstance, and *require*, under reasonable conditions, that a portion of our population shall undertake this duty? Can it be attended with any difficulty to enact, that every county, division, &c. shall furnish the number which its population points out, to be trained in this manner and to this extent, leaving it to every county to select the individuals who, with least inconvenience and with most effect, can undertake this duty? When the number of those who are to be subjected to the highest degree of training is established, the number of those who are to be trained in a slighter degree may easily be fixed; and these gradations may be carried to any extent which circumstances may require. Thus, this great and important advantage will be obtained, that, while by the operation of such a law as the present *training-act*, we must be content with what is applicable to those from whom the *smallest* degree of sacrifice can be required; in the mode I am recommending, we can demand from every individual the *greatest* degree of assistance in the public cause which his par-

ticular circumstances enable him to give. Nay, farther, by giving to a certain number a degree of practice and habit in their new duty, which cannot be required from the whole, *they* will become a sort of basis, upon which, in the hour of danger, the remainder may be incorporated.

Supposing, then, that the law shall command the whole population, from 16 to 45, to be trained to the use of arms, I would propose that one-third, one-fourth, or one-fifth, or any other given proportion, shall be required to undertake a degree of duty similar to that of the volunteers on the establishment of June 1803. Let the proportion be specified, I am confident that there will be no difficulty in selecting the individuals. The whole would, in the first place, be subjected to ballot, but a licence allowed of serving either personally or by substitute; it being understood that this should be the *only alternative*, and that no penalty should be accepted in lieu of service personally, or by substitute. The ballot might unquestionably fall on individuals to whom personal service might be a very great hardship; but they could find no difficulty in procuring a substitute, on very moderate terms, among their young neighbours, to whom the task would be far from unacceptable. I would

propose that the proportion selected in this manner should be embodied into battalions, and that to every such battalion officers should be appointed, as at present for the volunteer corps, by the Lord-lieutenants, with his Majesty's approbation. These officers, selected from the higher classes of the community, would feel a pride in the performance of the duty allotted to them; while those under their command would feel in a very different manner from what they would do, upon being called out to be drilled by a serjeant of the line, *under the charge of a constable or peace-officer.* It would renew and strengthen those bonds of connection between the different classes of society, the importance of which I have already pointed out, but which the measures lately adopted seem calculated to weaken or dissolve. I would propose that an adjutant and drill-serjeants should be appointed to every battalion, by which means alone the duty can be carried on with system and effect; but that the same adjutant and the same serjeants, under the superintendance of the same officers, should also be employed in training the remaining part, who are not to be required to submit to the same sacrifice of time. This secondary class

to be attached to, and considered as supernumeraries of the first class; and, in time of actual danger, to be joined with them. I would propose, that the first class alone should (at least in the first instance) be provided with clothing; and if a small addition were made to the present allowance, I am satisfied, that such clothing might last at least five years. For the reasons formerly assigned, I would certainly propose an allowance to be given that would admit of the expence of drums and fifes, and a little indulgence in show and parade. And, as the whole may, with great propriety, be termed a *home-militia*, I would unquestionably recommend, that those of the first class should be required to perform, every year, permanent duty for a fortnight or three weeks.

Such is a general outline of the plan which I should imagine to be best suited to our situation; because I think, that in every part of it, attention has been paid to the general principles which I have endeavoured to establish in the preceding pages. It supposes, in the first place, that previous preparation is necessary, in order to render men useful as armed defenders of their country. It supposes, that

it is only in battalions, or, in other words, in considerable bodies, under the direction of a superintending power always at hand, that this species of force can act with effect. It supposes that superintending and directing power to be placed, in the first instance, in the hands of those persons whose situation renders them most likely to possess the respect, attachment, and friendship, of those they are to lead and direct. It would tend to unite, in similarity of pursuit and occupation, the various classes of the community; strengthen the habits of friendship and union; and preserve to the higher class that influence in society to which they consider themselves as justly entitled. It supposes, too, that they who are called upon to perform an important duty, shall be indulged in a few of those gratifications which will render that duty palatable and agreeable. The importance of this last consideration cannot be too frequently urged. The people of Great Britain have shown, on numberless occasions, that there is no pecuniary or personal sacrifice which they will scruple to make in the cause of their country. But they have also shown, on more than one occasion, that though they may be led they will not be driven; and that

they expect, from those to whom the government of the country is entrusted, a proper degree of attention to their feelings, their inclinations, and even to their prejudices*.

At a time like the present it is surely desirable, it is indeed indispensable, to call into action every motive which can conciliate the great body of the people, and which can induce them to submit, not with patience merely, but with cheerfulness and cordiality, to the burdens necessary to be imposed, and the sacri-

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* It has been proposed, that the people may be trained to arms upon Sunday after divine service *.

As far as my constant habits of residence in the country enable me to judge, nothing could be more obnoxious to the great body of the people in Scotland, than being required to perform any species of military drill upon the Sabbath-day. Very few, indeed, would accede to such a proposal, and the few that did, would be objects of detestation to their whole neighbourhood. That the most rigid Presbyterians may have done so, when they conceived themselves to be called on to fight the battles of their religion, may be true; but it would be no easy task to persuade the great body of Scots Presbyterians, that the defence of their country against a foreign

* Fergusson's Letters upon the Establishment of Volunteer Corps, &c. page 102.

fices necessary to be made. It is surely of importance, that, in the defence of their country, they should be stimulated to act, not from obedience to legal authority alone, but from the operation of that zeal, that pride of feeling, by which men are animated, when acting in a station which they consider as honourable and distinguished, rather than that, when called out in such a glorious cause, they should feel themselves debased and degraded. Yet it were in vain to deny, that such are the

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enemy is as much a *religious* duty as the defence of their faith against Roman Catholics or Episcopals. But there is no occasion to have recourse to an expedient which would wound the feelings of the scrupulous. During a very considerable part of the year, there is sufficient time for exercise in the evening, after the work of the day is over. Nor will many be found in Scotland, who will not prefer to make a small sacrifice of their time, rather than interfere with the perfect sanctity of the Sabbath. Without any fear of being accused of Puritanism, I avow my opinion, that we ought to guard with the utmost caution against every thing which can in the smallest degree weaken the influence of religious sentiment. The frequent encroachments on the sanctity of the Sabbath, have already received but too much countenance, although the attention of the legislature has been drawn to the subject.

feelings of the people of Great Britain at this moment. It is far from my design to make these pages the vehicle of party politics, or of party invective. But it is a duty that every man owes to himself and his country, at such a period, to remove the veil with which the flattery of the servile adherents of ministers, may endeavour to conceal from them the unpopular effects of some of their measures.

I assert, then, without fear of contradiction, that no measure adopted by any minister who directed the councils of the British cabinet, ever had so great an effect in depressing the loyal and zealous spirit of the nation, as that which has lately been adopted, respecting our internal means of defence. In proof of this, I shall not refer to the speeches of men of the highest talents and respectability in Parliament: they may be supposed to be actuated by motives of party-spirit. I shall not refer to the various resolutions adopted in different counties and towns over the whole country: these, it may be alleged, were produced solely by local causes, and under the influence of individuals adverse to the interests of those now in power. But I shall refer to the personal knowledge of every individual of his Majesty's official Go-

vernment; to the personal knowledge of every Peer, of every Commoner, who possesses a seat in Parliament, if the assertion be not founded in truth. I ask every man of this description, if in his own neighbourhood, if in the society in which he lives, he does not observe the dissatisfaction these measures have produced? I ask him, if he ever meets with a single individual who attempts to defend these measures, excepting a very few indeed, who, from their partiality to one of the parties now possessed of much influence in his Majesty's councils, are considered as being misled on all occasions by the warmth of their political attachments? I ask, if among that part of the community, who, unconnected with any political party, unattached to any political leader, consider the different measures of Government solely as they affect the real interests of the great body of the people, there is almost a single individual, who does not at least *regret* the adoption of these measures? I ask, if it is not consistent with the personal knowledge of each individual, that the spirit, the zeal, the animated pleasure, with which the middling and lower classes, in his neighbourhood, *performed* the duties allotted to them, be not suc-

ceeded by languor, carelessness, and inattention, and whether there does not exist, in the minds of all, a desire to evade and counteract the operation of these new measures? I ask, if it is not acknowledged, that the only considerations which induce, or can induce the generality of the most respectable part of the community, to give any support or assistance in carrying these measures into effect, are not to be ascribed solely to this, that in times like the present, and under the peculiar circumstances in which we are placed, men of sober judgment, and minds unwarped by party heat, are fearful of the consequences which might arise, from encouraging a strong spirit of opposition to his Majesty's Government? Are not all who, in their own neighbourhood, are esteemed persons of sound judgment, general information, and local influence, unanimous in considering these measures as little suited to the spirit, the habits, the feelings of the people of this country; and do we not see the newspapers already full of advertisements, proposing to secure individuals against the operation of a measure confessedly unpopular? It is to this sort of personal knowledge alone, that I wish to refer for the proof of what I have stated. Eloquence may easily

mislead, ingenuity may easily produce plausible reasons in defence of any measure; but if our rulers will calmly and impartially consult the evidence which they can procure from their own observation, if they will trust to the unbiassed expressions of general opinion, which they can themselves collect, instead of relying on the report of those who have an interest to flatter and deceive them, they will not long remain ignorant of the real sentiments of the great body of the nation; nor will they, I am persuaded, continue to disgust, where it is so easy to gratify, or to depress the spirit of the nation, at a moment when every consideration requires that it should be roused and encouraged.

In vain can they attempt to deceive themselves. In vain can their situation, or the general opinion which prevails, of the necessity of supporting Government at this period of unexampled danger, secure them a majority in our national councils. In vain will the same considerations induce the great body of the people to submit to measures, which, although they disapprove, they think it unwise to counteract. The energy, the zeal, the active co-*operation* of all ranks, so necessary at such a

period, is extinguished, and we must trust to the languid efforts of submission and obedience.

The only objection of any weight which has been, or, as I apprehend, can be stated to a plan of the nature which I have proposed, is the expence with which it would be attended; but I own that, to me at least, this objection does not appear to be of a very formidable nature. It has never been urged as an argument against increasing our regular army, that the expence would be oppressive. I have already expressed my conviction, that if our regular army could be sufficiently increased, it would provide the most desirable and efficient means of defence; and I have stated the considerations which induce me to believe that this is not possible. But if it be admitted, that the expence which would be occasioned by that measure should not prevent its adoption, the same, or a less considerable expence, applied to any other purpose, could not, in its effects, as a measure of finance, be attended with any consequence different in the one case from what would occur in the other. If, then, we can afford the expence in the one instance, it cannot be urged as an obstacle in the other. It would

be a strange mode of reasoning, were any individual to assert that he could afford £. 10,000 for building a substantial family mansion, but, as he cannot procure the materials for that purpose, he must lie in the open air, because he cannot *afford* to purchase a tent, or to erect a cottage. Since we *cannot employ* the large sum, which would be required to raise and subsist a numerous addition to our regular force, we can surely, from this very circumstance, the better afford to expend *a part* of it in those plans which we are obliged to substitute; bearing ever in mind, that the question is not, what is the best measure which can be imagined, but what is the best measure which, under the circumstances in which we are placed, we have it in our power to adopt.

I have supposed, as will be seen by the Appendix, that an annual expence, not exceeding £.780,000 will be sufficient*, and possibly even a smaller sum might be adequate to accomplish this purpose. I do not entertain the smallest

* This sum will defray the annual expence of two hundred thousand men, exclusive of officers and non-commissioned officers, so that the whole number of men under arms will not be less than 217,000, including officers, &c.

doubt, that if it be fairly and openly declared, that such a sum is required for the purpose under consideration, the taxes necessary to provide it will be submitted to with cheerfulness; and our country will be immediately supplied with a host of armed patriots, who, though inferior to a regular army in correctness of discipline, and military habits, will possess enough of these qualities to render them valuable auxiliaries to that force; and whose zeal in the common cause, will be no small compensation for the want of these qualities, which, however, they will possess in a greater degree than it is possible to obtain in any other species of subsidiary force. *Submission* to the necessary burdens of the state is all that the *power* of Government can command; but if we can procure only *submission to the law*, in our exertions to defend our country, our situation is indeed deplorable.

Instead, then, of discouraging that military spirit which had displayed its effects among all ranks; instead of ridiculing the endeavour of every citizen to acquire some knowledge of the military art; instead of teaching our regular army, that they are degraded by their fellow-countrymen bearing their titles and assum-

ing their garb—let that spirit be cherished and encouraged; let those attempts towards military knowledge and habit be stimulated and applauded; and let our regular army be well assured, that at no time was their rank in society so high, or their professional character in so great and general estimation, as when the proudest peer in the realm, the most respectable among the independent landholders, and the most opulent of our merchants, were vain of bearing their titles, wearing their dress, and assimilating themselves to their habits. We shall then see the whole physical force of the nation flocking round its standards; and zeal, courage, loyalty, and patriotism, animating every British heart.

APPENDIX.

THE principles, which I conceive ought to regulate any system for calling out the great body of the people in defence of their country, as stated in the preceding pages, are—

First, That the whole of our population shall be called out by *Law*.

Second, That different classes and descriptions of our population can perform certain duties, and submit to certain sacrifices, which cannot be performed by others with the same effect, nor required of them, without creating much individual hardship and inconvenience.

Third, And of consequence, that the different duties ought to be allotted to those who can perform them with least inconvenience to themselves, and with greatest benefit to the Public.

The whole of our population has already been divided into four classes, by the opera-

tion of the *general defence-act.* The whole of those who, from their age and situation, can with propriety be called on to serve their country, by carrying arms in its defence, are contained in the three first classes of that act; and, for the purpose at present under consideration, I imagine, it will be most convenient to consider those three clases, as constituting only one, which may be called the *first* class.

While this will simplify the task, I do not conceive that it can occasion any injustice or hardship. The power of serving by substitute, which it is proposed to grant, will enable those who, from being more advanced in life, or from other circumstances, may be desirous of declining the severer duties, to avoid what to them might be attended with great inconvenience.

I propose, that the whole of the subsidiary force shall be taken from the first class; while the second, which comprises the fourth class of the general defence-act, shall not be required to perform any duty of a military nature.

I would propose, that a certain proportion (one third, for instance) of the first class, shall be required to undertake a degree of duty somewhat similar to that of the volunteers on the *establishment* of June 1803, by being trained

at home not less than *thirty-eight* days; and upon permanent duty not less than fourteen days in the year.

I would propose, that *one-half* of this class shall be required to undertake a degree of duty similar to that of the volunteers of the present establishment, being trained at home a number of days, not exceeding twenty-six; and that the remaining *sixth* shall be set apart in aid of the second class, (viz. the fourth class of the defence-act), and shall be required merely to assemble once or twice in the year to be mustered, to have their duty pointed out to them, and their superintendants and directors appointed*.

I would propose, that the ballot shall determine the individuals of the first class who shall be required to perform the different species of duty.

And I would propose, that those upon whom the ballot falls for the most severe species of duty, and who may be called the *permanent*

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* It is perfectly obvious, that, in case of invasion, it would be absolutely necessary to leave some of the young and active to assist those men advanced in life, in the performance of the indispensable duties set apart to them.

home-militia, shall be divided, as nearly as circumstances will admit, into companies of forty rank and file. Each company to be commanded by a captain, lieutenant, and ensign, appointed by the lord-lieutenants of counties, with his Majesty's approbation. That to each company shall be appointed a serjeant upon permanent pay; two serjeants, who shall receive pay only on the days of exercise; and two drummers, to whom such pay shall be allowed as may be an inducement to young lads to enter into a permanent engagement; without which it will be impossible to have the duty performed in a tolerable manner.

I would propose, that, as far as the circumstances of each county, town, or division, will admit, ten such companies shall be formed into a battalion, under the command of a lieutenant-colonel commandant, lieutenant-colonel, and major, with an adjutant, who shall receive constant pay and forage for a horse, and a serjeant-major on permanent pay.

I would propose, that to each company of this sort shall be attached, as nearly as circumstances will admit, *sixty* of those from whom the lesser degree of duty is required; and who *may be* termed supernumeraries, to be instruct-

ed by the officers, staff, and non-commissioned officers of the battalion (of which they are to form a constituent part) at twenty-six of the ordinary drills of their respective companies; or at such times as may be appointed by the commanding officer, with the approbation of the Lord-lieutenant.

I would propose, that to the permanent part of the establishment alone clothing should be granted, at the rate of £. 2 for each rank and file for *five* years; which clothing shall not be worn, except at general field days, on permanent duty, or when expressly ordered by the officer commanding the battalion. All vacancies in the permanent part of the battalion to be filled up by ballot from the supernumeraries.

I would propose, that an allowance of £. 35 per company of forty permanent and sixty supernumeraries, be granted for the repair of arms and contingents, at the disposal of the commanding officer of each battalion, but that such commanding officer shall be required to submit an account of the expenditure of this sum to the lieutenancy of the county, town, or division. I would certainly propose, that depots

of clothing for the whole should be provided (although it is not proposed to issue clothing but for the permanent part of the establishment), because on service it would otherwise be impossible to conceal, in the smallest degree, the nature of the force opposed to the enemy, or to detect treason or desertion.

As in all probability, it would not be desirable to arm, at any one period, the whole numbers included in the first class, which it is proposed to subject to these services, I would propose, that the number of years during which each individual shall be required to perform those duties, shall be fixed, and that the whole of this class shall be required to serve in rotation.

I would propose, that each officer, under the rank of a field-officer, shall have an annual allowance, not exceeding £.15, to cover the expence to which he may be subjected in providing uniform, &c. besides the pay of his rank, when upon permanent duty or actual service.

To field-officers I do not propose to give any pay, but that of their rank, when upon permanent duty, or on service; as such officers will probably be selected from gentlemen to whom such an allowance could not be of any import-

ance.

I would propose, that the whole of those who shall at any time be called out, either as permanent or supernumeraries, shall be provided with arms, which shall be entrusted to the keeping of each individual so called out; for, I am persuaded, that it is only by rendering every man responsible for his own arms, that it is possible to secure their being kept in tolerable order. All necessary repairs occasioned by accidents in the field, or on service, to be defrayed by the commanding officer out of the contingent allowance, but all damage occasioned by carelessness or neglect, to be paid for by those who have the custody of the arms.

I do not imagine that there could, in general, be much difficulty in arranging the whole of the force raised in this manner into battalions of ten companies. A small variation in the strength of the companies, would adapt this sort of arrangement to the population of any county, and it is desirable to avoid the expence of additional officers.

It appears to me, that I have now entered with sufficient detail into the plan which I propose, to enable any one to judge of its expediency, and I should consider it as presumption to do more. I shall therefore proceed to make